

on predestination in terms of insult to Arminius, who was personally present ; to which the latter prepared a refutation clothed in terms of personal respect toward his opponent. Gomarus afterward confessed that he could easily live at peace with Arminius but for the clergy and Churches, who were intensely hostile to his liberal doctrines. Their Belgic Confession, Calvinistic as it was, was sacred in their hearts as being the banner under which they had fought the battle of civil and religious liberty against Spain and popery ; and they now, alas ! were making it the instrument of religious intolerance. Arminius was held as invalidating that Confession, and so was every-where traduced by the clergy as a baptist, a Pelagian, and a Coornherter. Yet, really, the doctrines he taught were essentially the doctrines of St. Chrysostom, Melancthon, Jeremy Taylor, and John Wesley. In regard to the Confession, he ever treated it with reverence, and only claimed the right of that same liberality of interpretation which Lutherans exercised with the Augsburg Confession—a liberality similar to that which the English clergy now exercise in regard to the seventeenth of their Thirty-Nine Articles. A voluntary Church may, like any other voluntary association, be, if it pleases, stringent in its interpretations, but a State Church, which strains all to a tight interpretation of a specific creed under pain of State disabilities, runs into religious despotism. This was, therefore, a genuine contest for religious liberty. Arminius was proscribed by the clergy, harassed by irresponsible deputations, and his students were subjected to persecutions and exclusions from the ministry. The more intelligent laity, including the magistracy, and especially the chief magistrate, Olden Barnevelt, were favourable to Arminius, who at length appealed to the national legislature (called the States-General) for protection. That body appointed a committee or council, who, having heard both Gomarus and